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ABSTRACT

The efforts of the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA) to affiliate with independent scholars and artists are described. A protocol to guide the development of beneficial relationships between colleges and independents is also presented. The first step was to survey the population of independent scholars and artists within the GLCA area. Faculty members were asked to advise independent scholars/artists in their families to contact GLCA. Three categories of respondents were identified: spouse of a faculty member, part-time faculty, and retired faculty. After exchange of ideas by mail, an all-day meeting of independents from several campuses was held. A chief academic officer was also invited so that an administrative viewpoint could be built into proposals. One issue that could not be resolved at the meeting was the definition of an independent scholar (i.e., whether it should be based on degree attainment or work in progress). The protocol identifies facilities that colleges might extend to independents. Provisions of the protocol are flexible, based on a wide range of geographic, disciplinary, and human variables. It is concluded that the consortium's efforts grew from the recognition that independents could enhance the intellectual and artistic ambience of colleges. (SW)

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CONSORTIAL SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS

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Great Lakes Colleges Association

March 20, 1984

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The Great Lakes Colleges Association* recently identified independent scholars and artists functioning within our orbit and determined that all parties would benefit from their affiliation with the consortium. As a result, a registry of independent scholars and artists has been started from which our colleges may draw needed talent. Furthermore, a Protocol has been drawn up to guide the development of mutually beneficial relationships between the colleges and the independents.

The protocol is reproduced below, with the thought that it may provide a useful model for other institutions. Of equal interest is the process by which it was agreed on. The process by which new ideas are adopted by a consortium is by its nature more complex than it would be within a single institution, since not only must the idea gain the acceptance of several different teams, but the variants introduced by any one set of players must be rendered acceptable to all the other players. Most difficult of all, the product, if it is to be intellectually exciting, cannot have been reduced to a set of common denominators so limited that the game proves not to have been worth the candle.

Our first step was to survey the population of independent artists and scholars within the GLCA orbit. At first, no attempt was made to define who these people might be; faculty members

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were simply asked to advise "the independent scholar or artist in your family" to write to the project director, Judith Elkin, at the GLCA office in Ann Arbor. The responses received clearly divided into three categories: spouse of a faculty member, part-time faculty, and retired faculty. These became our target population. Despite the variety of disciplines displayed by this group, some common needs emerged clearly. Primary among these was the need for recognition by the academic community in which the independent scholar lives, but from which she/he feels excluded. All these needs are addressed in the protocol.

Following the survey and exchange of ideas by mail, an all-day meeting of independents from various campuses was held, at which ideas were exchanged and proposals formulated. A chief academic officer was also invited, in order that an administrative viewpoint could be built into proposals from the start. Our experience was that immediate agreement could be reached on some issues (all independents need access to a college library); other issues varied in importance from discipline to discipline or from college to college; while still other issues could not be resolved. The latter included such questions as: who is an independent scholar? (All agreed on a published Ph.D.; but what of someone working on her master's thesis, or an uncredentialed local historian?) and

what is the extent of our responsibility? (All agreed on faculty spouses, but what of the scholar or artist working in one of our college towns yet having no family member associated with the college?)

These questions were left unanswered while a draft protocol governing relations between the colleges and independent scholars/artists was drawn up and taken to the GLCA Deans' Council, where it was presented by Jon Fuller, consortial president. There, its ramifications were discussed from an institutional standpoint. Questions relating to insurance liability, equity between faculty and non-faculty personnel, possible entanglements with part-time faculty members, and so forth, had to be resolved.

The deans found themselves in agreement on some measures the committee had proposed, dubious about others. The Protocol therefore displays a short and a long list of facilities which colleges might extend to their independents--now dubbed affiliated scholars/artists. It is expected that the short list of services will be extended to all who establish their bona fides according to local criteria; items on the long list (as well as others not mentioned there) could be extended as the result of negotiation between the parties. There is no upper limit on the degree of cooperation that can be worked out.

Independent scholars and artists who fall into the named categories can now use the Protocol as a platform from

which to approach the chief academic officer of a GLCA college to negotiate terms of affiliation. Matters of definition are left to local option and will be resolved through circumstance and negotiation. Thus, the provisions of the protocol are flexible, open to reflect the wide range of geographic, disciplinary and human variables that may surface. Most important, the consortium has accepted the concept of the independent scholar or artist as active members of the intellectual community who are deserving of support and capable of enhancing the intellectual and artistic ambience of the colleges.

* Albion, Antioch, Denison, DePauw, Earlham, Hope, Kalamazoo, Kenyon, Oberlin, Ohio Wesleyan, Wabash, Wooster.

INDEPENDENT SCHOLARS' PROTOCOL

Recognizing that many persons peripherally related to our colleges are working independently as scholars or artists while lacking an institutional base for their work;

Believing that the integration of these independents into campus life would work to the mutual advantage of all concerned parties;

The GLCA colleges propose to institute the status of Affiliated Scholar or Affiliated Artist, and to extend this title to appropriate persons within the college community. Development and agreement to this protocol indicate our commitment to the integration of independent scholars and artists into the intellectual and artistic life of our campuses.

I Definition

An independent scholar (or artist) may be defined as a person who is carrying on scholarly (or artistic) activity but who does not have faculty status at any teaching or research institution. Any arrangements that are made should have clear advantages both for the independent scholar and for the college. For an independent scholar to become the concern of GLCA, she/he must be a member of the GLCA community as locally defined. Some examples would include: the spouse of a faculty member or administrator, a retired employee, a person who has served the college in some professional capacity on either a full- or a parttime basis.

II Privileges which the colleges may extend to independent scholars

1. Access to the library on the same basis as faculty members
2. Use of office space, as available
3. Access by the independent scholar to courses offered by the college
4. Assistance in identifying referees for papers and appropriate persons for writing letters of reference
5. Use of college stationery for professional correspondence and in connection with grant applications
6. Use of college's services as fiscal agent in grant administration

The colleges would be willing to consider requests from independent scholars for additional support services, where there is a mutual advantage to both the college and the independent scholar. Additional services which might be negotiated include the use of computer facilities, laboratory space or equipment, copying services, assistance in attending professional meetings, or inclusion in staff benefit plans.

Independent scholars and artists may be asked to pay for the provision of services where there is a cost incurred. It is recommended that, insofar as possible, services be extended on the same terms as those offered to faculty members.

III Services offered by the central office of GLCA

1. Support facilities will be made available at the Ann Arbor office for independent scholars who are associated with its own staff or who are coming from any GLCA campus or off-campus program for the purpose of research.

2. GLCA welcomes the participation of independent scholars in relevant faculty development conferences and will attempt, within limits of its resources, to assist with costs (exclusive of room, board and transportation).

3. The President of GLCA will be available for consultation by either party in the event that a college and an applicant for affiliated scholar/affiliated artist status fail to reach agreement on extending that status.

IV Responsibilities of the independent scholar/artist

1. It is understood that the status of Affiliated Scholar/Artist is extended as a professional courtesy, and that individuals are expected to maintain the same professional standards as are demanded of faculty members.

2. An Affiliated Scholar should be prepared to assist faculty by acting as a resource person, counselor, or in another capacity where he/she is qualified; where there is a need for formal or prolonged consultation, a professional fee should be paid.

3. The Affiliated Scholar acknowledges the assistance and support of the host college in publishing her/his work.

4. It is the responsibility of the independent scholar to initiate the request for affiliation, which should be directed to the chief academic officer of the college at which status is desired; or, where appropriate, to the President of GLCA.

5. Should the independent scholar receive a grant through the sponsorship of the college, the college would be entitled to indirect costs paid as part of the grant.

V Nature of this protocol

This protocol is intended to serve as a guide to the colleges and to independent scholars/artists in reaching agreements that can work to their mutual advantage. It is the consensus of the Chief Academic Officers, the GLCA staff, and the Independent Scholars' Committee, that the highest degree of flexibility should be permitted in arriving at such arrangements. At the core of the agreements is the recognition of the contribution which independent scholars and artists make to the scholarly life of the campus and of the nation. ☐